

HOUSE BILL 306

By Hood

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 44,
Chapter 17, relative to the licensing of dogs.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 44, Chapter 17, is amended by adding Sections 2 through 10 of this act as a new part thereto.

SECTION 2. Every owner or keeper of a dog four (4) months old or older shall have such dog registered annually. Each registration shall include a unique number, a description of the dog, and the license number issued for such dog. Each dog shall wear around its neck a collar to which shall be attached a metal tag with the following information printed or embossed thereon:

- (1) The name of the city, town or area in which the dog lives;
- (2) Year of issuance of the dog license; and
- (3) The registration number.

All licenses issued pursuant to this act shall expire May 1 of each year.

SECTION 3. Before a license is issued pursuant to this act, the owner or keeper of the dog shall furnish to the county clerk or licensed veterinarian verification from a licensed veterinarian that the dog has been vaccinated against rabies pursuant to Title 68, Chapter 8.

SECTION 4. All county clerks and licensed veterinarians shall be authorized to issue licenses and collect license fees pursuant to this act. All records for the issuance of licenses pursuant to this act are subject to review by the comptroller of the treasury.

SECTION 5. A duly recorded license is valid throughout the state of Tennessee and shall be transferred with the dog that is licensed. A fee of two dollars (\$2.00) may be assessed for the issuance of a replacement license.

SECTION 6.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the fee for licenses shall be:

(1) Four dollars fifty cents (\$4.50) for dogs not less than four (4) months old but not more than seven (7) months old, that are not spayed or neutered and dogs more than seven (7) months old that are spayed or neutered;

(2) Seven dollars (\$7.00) for unneutered male or unspayed female dogs seven (7) months or older;

(3) Two dollars (\$2.00) for a dog if the owner is sixty-five (65) years or older; provided such fee shall only apply to one (1) dog of the owner; for all additional dogs of such owner the fee shall be as provided in subdivisions (1) and (2);

(4) For group licenses the fee shall be twenty dollars (\$20.00).

(b) The fee for every license that expires in less than three (3) months shall be three dollars (\$3.00).

(c) Group licenses shall be available to dealers as defined in Section 44-17-102.

(d) No license fee shall be required for dogs that are less than three (3) months old.

SECTION 7.

(a) For the purposes of this section, a "breeder" means any person who breeds dogs for sale, gift or transfer in any manner.

(b) No dog shall be sold by a breeder without first being inoculated against infectious canine diseases using a vaccine approved by the state veterinarian and accompanied by an official health certificate issued by a licensed veterinarian within fourteen (14) days of such sale. Health certificates shall be issued in triplicate. One (1) copy shall be transmitted to the state veterinarian within seven (7) days of the sale of the dog, one (1) copy shall be kept by the breeder of the dog for at least three (3) years from

the date of transfer of the dog, and (1) copy shall be given to the purchaser or recipient of the dog.

(c) For the purposes of this section, an "official health certificate" means a form approved by the state veterinarian containing the following:

- (1) The name and address of the breeder;
- (2) The age, sex, breed and description of the dog;
- (3) A list of all types of vaccines or medications administered to such dog;
- (4) Certification by a veterinarian that such dog is free from visual evidence of communicable diseases such as kennel cough (infectious tracheo bronchitis) canine distemper, and external and internal parasites (including coccidiosis).

(d) Animal shelters and other facilities operated for the collection, care or euthanasia of stray, neglected, abandoned or unwanted nonlivestock animals shall be exempt from the provisions of this section.

SECTION 8. Guide dogs, police dogs, fire dogs, service dogs, and search and rescue dogs shall be exempt from registration and licensing fees imposed by this act. When a blind, deaf or hearing impaired, or mobility impaired person applies for a license, such person shall present an identification card or other sufficient evidence from a guide dog, hearing ear dog, or service dog training agency or school.

SECTION 9.

(a) All persons collecting registration and licensing fees pursuant to this act shall retain one dollar (\$1.00) for each registration or license issued and shall transfer any remaining funds to the appropriate city, county, metropolitan government or municipality by the twentieth of the following month of sale. Persons collecting registration and licensing fees in a municipality shall transfer the remaining funds to the municipality. Persons collecting registration and licensing

fees in an area outside a municipality's limits shall transfer the remaining funds to the county in which such funds are collected.

(b) Should any person collecting registration and licensing fees fail or refuse to remit the fees on or before the twentieth of the month when due, any county or municipality concerned may institute legal action for collection of such delinquent fees by any method now authorized by law for the collection of delinquent privileges taxes, or by suit.

SECTION 10. Failure to obtain proper registration or licensing for a dog pursuant to this part is a Class C misdemeanor punishable by a fine only of not more than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00). No court costs shall be imposed or assessed against anyone convicted of a violation of this section.

SECTION 11. The commissioner of agriculture is authorized to design or obtain metal tags as provided in Section 2 of this act. The commissioner of agriculture is also authorized to promulgate rules and regulations pursuant to title 4, chapter 5, to implement the provisions of this act.

SECTION 12. This act shall take effect January 1, 2008, the public welfare requiring it.